

CITY OF DETROIT  
**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

■ **2001-2002 BIENNIAL REPORT**



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## MAYOR

Kwame M. Kilpatrick  
City of Detroit

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Arthur Simons, Chairman  
Susan Glaser, Vice-Chairperson  
Dr. David Cason, Jr. AICP  
Thomas Christensen  
Robert L. Glenn  
John Slater  
Kathleen Wendler  
Roy Levy Williams  
Linda Smith

## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF

Marsha S. Bruhn, Director  
Marcus D. Loper, Deputy Director  
Michael O. Adebayo  
M. Rory Bolger  
Carmen Y. Davis (through January 1, 2002)  
Robert C. Davis (through June 1, 2002)  
Deborah Kay Ferris  
Christopher J. Gulock  
Tony Jeffrey  
JoAnn J. Jeromin  
Angeline Lawrence  
E. Lorraine Leonard  
Heidi Alcock Lobb  
Kathryn Lynch Underwood  
Gregory E. Moots  
Marcell R. Todd, Jr.  
Marja M. Winters

## CITIZEN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Edward Anderson  
Charles Brooks  
Derrick Brown  
Brenda Goss Andrews  
Juanita Hernandez  
Ruth Kennedy  
Edward Koch  
James Long (since 7/1/01)  
Linda Masino  
Abdul Karriem Muhammad  
Lerrlyn Nelson (since 7/1/02)  
Diantha Tillman (since 7/1/02)  
Norma Tucker  
William Ware

# PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS



**Arthur Simons**  
Chairperson



**Susan Glaser**  
Vice-Chairperson



**Dr. David Cason, Jr. AICP**



**Thomas Christensen**



**Robert L. Glenn**



**John Slater**



**Linda Smith**



**Kathleen Wendler**



**Roy Levy Williams**



## LETTER FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Arthur Simons



Honorable Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick  
Honorable City Council  
Citizens of the City of Detroit

The year 2002 marks my twentieth year as a commissioner with the City Planning Commission, the last six as chairperson. I am happy to see how the City has moved during those years from increasing decline and disinvestment to an emerging image of a revitalized riverfront, corporate reinvestment, and a downtown newly energized as a sports and entertainment center.

We've learned some lessons about significant factors that led to successful revitalization efforts in other cities. In 2001, the Commission looked at the City of Cleveland and studied the dynamics of how the business community, the Mayor and other city administrators worked together to solve that city's economic problems. We've advised City Council and other City departments on the need for code enforcement and implementation of the City's Municipal Civil Infractions Bureau. In order for our City to be better, it has to look better, and all citizens and businesses need to be reminded of their obligation to maintain their property.

In another effort to attack a long-standing problem and improve the image of the city, the Commission recommended an ordinance to regulate the parking of trucks and other commercial vehicles on business strips and in the neighborhoods. We were particularly pleased to be able to revisit the issue of casinos on the riverfront. Our strong stand against this poor land-use decision by the previous administration did not change the prior approval of the project in that area, but the relocation of the casinos out of the near east riverfront by the current Mayor enabled the Commission to recommend a zoning classification that will encourage more compatible land use development in the future.

On behalf of the Commission members, it continues to be our privilege to serve the citizens of Detroit.



Arthur Simons  
Chairperson

## CITIZEN REVIEW COMMITTEE (CRC)

**T**he Citizen Review Committee provides the primary venue for public review and input for the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund as part of the Community Development Block Grant allocation process. The Committee was established in 1978 to review applications and present recommendations to the City Planning Commission. Members of the CRC are nominated for three-year, overlapping terms; these eleven members represent various communities throughout the City and reflect a diverse history of grass-roots community involvement and knowledge of both neighborhood and citywide issues. Each member volunteers 10-20 hours per week during the proposal review process in reading and reviewing proposals and evaluations and then presents the information to the rest of the committee members for discussion and recommendation. The CRC generally meets December through March. Meetings are open to the public. However, citizen comments are restricted to the annual City Council public hearing.

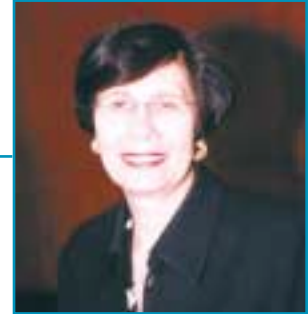


**Citizen Review Committee: (L to R)**

Ed Anderson, William Ware, Diantha Tillman, Juanita Hernandez, Edward Koch, Derrick Brown, Abdul Karriem Muhammad, Lerrlyn Nelson, and James Long; (Not Pictured) Brenda Goss Andrews and Linda Masino

## LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Marsha S. Bruhn



Each year the Commission adopts goals and objectives and a work program that set out the expectations of what needs to be accomplished in the coming year. Progress reports at six and twelve month intervals then become the guideposts as to the accomplishments made over the stated time frames. What is significant is the extent to which these expectations are met, given sometimes competing priorities that naturally arise in city government.

What was not expected at the beginning of 2001 was the extent to which the Commission would be dealing with transit-related issues. Numerous discussions were held on the need for a regional mass transit plan, a proposed Lansing to Detroit rail system (CATA), the Chamber of Commerce's SpeedLink bus transit system, the I-375 extension, and improvements to the I-75 freeway. Southwest Detroit resident and business concerns over a proposed expansion of the Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal led to in-depth review and analysis by Commission members and staff, and the eventual rejection by City Council of the expansion alternative supported by the Michigan Department of Transportation and its consultant. As is so often the case, our staff accommodated to a quick learning curve and provided the information needed for informed decision-making.

The constant challenges, the commitment of our Commission members, and the joy of working with a loyal and dedicated staff are constant reminders of what a privilege it is to work for the City Planning Commission and City Council. Our next big project is completion of the comprehensive revision of the Zoning Ordinance, an initiative begun in 1998 that should be a real asset as Detroit continues with the accelerated development activity of the past several years. I look forward to the continued opportunity to be of service to this great city and its citizens.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marsha S. Bruhn". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue horizontal line.

Marsha S. Bruhn, AICP, Director

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

**T**he City Planning Commission was created by Public Act 285 of 1931, which stated:

*Any municipality is authorized and empowered to make, adopt, amend, add to, or carry out a municipal plan as provided by this act and create by ordinance a planning commission with the powers and duties provided by this act.*

The City of Detroit, however, has had a planning commission continuously since 1909. The Civic Plan and Improvement Commission, organized in 1909, was recognized as the City Plan Commission under the City's first Charter, adopted in 1918. That first Charter brought the planning function under the control of a commission independent of elected officials. It was replaced by a new City Charter in 1974, which mandated that the task of planning be shared by the executive and legislative branches. It was felt that the legislative branch should have its own independent source of information and advice on the many matters relating to planning and development that come before it. Consequently, the City Planning Commission became an advisory body to the City Council, while the Community and Economic Development Department and Planning Department were accountable to the Mayor.

Detroit citizens approved a new Charter in 1996, which became effective in January 1997. While the new Charter's provisions have not affected the role of the City Planning Commission, functions of the two administrative departments have been combined into a new Planning and Development Department.

The reformulated department is responsible for proposing amendments to the Master Plan, coordinating the site plan review process, reviewing and processing development proposals, maintaining and selling city-owned property, and managing and monitoring Detroit's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

The City Planning Commission (CPC) consists of nine (9) members appointed by the City Council to three-year terms. Its members serve without pay, and must be Detroit residents. The Commission provides recommendations to the City Council on the physical, social, and economic development of the City. This includes the Five-Year Capital Agenda, Master Plan, and other proposals and ordinances for the regulation of development and land use as required by the City Charter. City Council is free to adopt or reject the Commission's recommendations.

As mandated by the Zoning Ordinance, the Commission is the zoning commission for the City and processes and evaluates all proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. In 1940, the Common Council adopted the first Zoning Ordinance for the City of Detroit. It was based on the fundamental theory that there is a "place for everything and everything has its place." Currently, the City Planning Commission, in collaboration with other departments and outside consultants, is making the first comprehensive revision of the Official Zoning Ordinance since 1968.



## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF

**T**he City Planning Commission and Detroit City Council are assisted by a sixteen-member staff, which performs technical research and analysis, and formulates recommendations on various referrals, initiatives, and ongoing commitments relating to planning and development in Detroit. Staff members also provide technical assistance to the Citizen Review Committee (CRC) in the review of the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF).

In addition to its traditional responsibilities of reviewing and making recommendations on zoning, Master Plan and development projects, staff is responsible for reviewing all land sales, community organizing, assistance in nuisance abatement, and participation on almost thirty task forces, boards and committees. CPC staff hold annual proposal writing workshops, train organizations in commercial strip revitalization, survey residents on current issues, mediate disputes, and answer thousands of questions annually from the public. The staff prides itself in its commitment to high quality work and service to the public.



**Pictured from left to right: (standing)**

Tony Jeffrey, Christopher J. Gulock, Heidi Alcock Lobb, JoAnn Jeromin, Gregory E. Moots, Angeline Lawrence Marcell Todd, Jr., Marja Winters, Janice Tillman, Deborah Ferris, Lorraine Leonard  
(not pictured) Carmen Y. Davis, Robert C. Davis and Kathryn Lynch Underwood

**(seated)** Michael O. Adebayo, Marcus D. Loper, *Deputy Director*, Marsha S. Bruhn, *Director*, M. Rory Bolger

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

## Near East Riverfront - Master Plan and Rezoning

The rezoning from SD5 (Special Development District for Casinos) to SD4 (Special Development District riverfront mixed uses) was initiated in August 2002. The boundary was East Jefferson, Riopelle, Chene, and Atwater. The 57 acres were rezoned in 1998 to allow the development of casinos on the riverfront. The purpose of this rezoning was to eliminate casinos as a permitted land use in the subject area, to allow the development of residential and commercial uses (as was originally envisioned in the area), and to make most of the existing conforming land uses. The subject area abuts SD4-zoned property on the east and the west and was originally proposed and recommended by the City Planning Commission in 1996 to be rezoned to SD4 zoning classification along with the adjacent areas. The rezoning of the subject property is consistent with what was originally envisioned for the area over ten years. The rezoning was approved in September 2002.

Related to the rezoning was an amendment to the Master Plan of Policies to remove references to gaming as the Future Land Use in the same area. Also related to this rezoning was an amendment to the SD4 zoning classification to reverse the previous SD5 classification. This was done to ensure equal treatment of businesses in this area with the businesses in the surrounding SD4-zoned area.

## I-375 East Riverfront Area Access Plan (ERFA)

Because of the volume of traffic anticipated to be generated by General Motor's Global Headquarters and

redevelopment plans for the area, the Commission considered a proposal for an extension of the I-375 freeway south of Jefferson. It was originally thought that improved access to the riverfront at E. Jefferson Avenue and the freeway could be achieved through the alteration of surface streets only. A new street, New Boulevard, was envisioned as a surface level roadway that would provide direct access to the riverfront.

Instead, a unique set of on and off ramps was proposed to accommodate the projected traffic to be generated by General Motors and to maintain or improve traffic flow along, to and from the I-375. The Commission paid particular attention to leaving flexibility for other possible transit solutions in the future, including mass transit to the area. This would, however, have to be addressed as part of a separate initiative, as would tunnel-related concerns. The Commission's recommendation to City Council was for approval but with several conditions, including further refinement of the design in the next phase of the project to provide better east/west traffic flow in the area and leaving open the opportunity for mass transit in the future.

## Ford Freeway Rehabilitation

CPC staff reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) for the proposed expansion of the I-94 Freeway between Connor Rd. and I-96. The "Build Proposal" initial proposal by MDOT included the substantial widening of the freeway to more than 300 feet by the addition of two



driving lanes, acceleration/deceleration lanes, three-lane continuous service drives on both sides of the freeway, and the reservation of 55 feet within the median for future mass-transit use. Many issues were raised in the Commission's recommendation to City Council, leading to a resolution approved by City Council requesting that MDOT consider many of the issues raised. Issues included the width of the right-of-way, noise impacts on adjacent properties, and the consideration of mass transit.

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been completed and is being reviewed. It seems to take into account many of the suggestions and issues raised by CPC, members of the public, and City Council. The width of the right-of-way has been reduced to generally stay within the bounds of the existing freeway, though some expansion of the right-of-way is still proposed and supported to allow the creation of continuous service drives. The noise barrier issue has also been addressed. Other issues are still being resolved. CPC staff has been working with other City departments to review the FEIS and to give a coordinated response to MDOT.

#### [Detroit Intermodal Freight Terminal \(DIFT\)](#)

The Commission was extensively involved in providing a voice to residents and business owners of Southwest Detroit, regarding the proposed DIFT project. For the past several years, MDOT has been studying the development of a single intermodal yard, referred to as the DIFT, for Detroit's four main railroads at the 500-acre Junction Yard, located near the intersection of Livernois and John Kronk avenues.

In 2001, MDOT hired the Corradino Group to conduct a feasibility study of placing the DIFT at Junction Yard, including projecting how much land would be needed, how much truck traffic would be generated, and how much noise and air pollution would increase and developing ways to address negative impacts. The Corradino Group produced 4 technical reports studying 3 different rail strategies, including: 1) no expansion of the existing yard; 2) expansion of the yard by about 45 acres; and 3) expansion of the yard by about 340 acres.

At the Commission public hearings on December 6, 2001 and February 5, 2002, the overwhelming majority of the attendees expressed opposition. In spite of this, in March 2002, at the request of MDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) issued a Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposed DIFT project. The EIS chose to evaluate the no action alternative and refinements of Rail Strategy #3. CPC staff provided the Commission with an extensive report on the DIFT, including an analysis of the public hearings, residential and business relocation, community planning efforts, and land use issues. After conducting several discussions on the DIFT, on June 20, 2002, the Commission voted unanimously that Rail Strategy #3 was unacceptable and recommended that the City Council oppose it. By taking such a position, the Commission felt the City had a greater ability to influence the EIS process. More importantly, the Commissioners felt their opposition would send a message to the community that the City was interested in protecting and preserving the residential reinvestment that is occurring.

On July 31, 2002, City Council passed a resolution opposing Rail Strategy #3. In late 2002, the FHWA indicated that the EIS must consider a range of practical alternatives. As a result, in March 2003, the FHWA issued a revised Notice of Intent adding another alternative that involves improving/expanding the four main intermodal yards in the region with federal funding and oversight. The Commission will continue to monitor the EIS process, which will be completed by the summer of 2004.

#### Truck Parking

Over the past several years, the City has received an increasing number of complaints about the parking of oversized vehicles and trailers on City streets — particularly in residential neighborhoods. The Commission has played an active role in helping to address this problem. In early January 2001, at the direction of City Council, a working group of CPC staff and 5 other City Departments was assembled to draft an ordinance recommending ways to better regulate this problem.

In May and June 2001, before the working group submitted its preliminary recommendations to City Council, the Commission held discussions about the proposed amendments. The Commission was particularly concerned that the \$30 fine was too low and should be substantially increased and raised many concerns about the parking of large vehicles, particularly motor homes, on private residential property. The Commission challenged CPC staff to simultaneously add appropriate regulations to the comprehensive revision of the Zoning Ordinance dealing with the parking of commercial vehicles, recreational vehicles, and trailers on residential lots.

During the following year, the Law Department drafted an ordinance, and in May 2002, the Commission held a public hearing on the ordinance inviting community groups from around the City to comment. The Commission recommended approval of the ordinance and stressed City workers, businesses, and residents would need to be educated regarding the proposed changes, and that a brochure summarizing the new ordinance should be created. In January 2003, the City Council held a public hearing on the proposed ordinance, and, pending final Law Department review, it is hoped that the ordinance will be passed in the summer of 2003.

#### Lead in Housing

In response to the federal regulations requiring cities to remediate lead in homes where federal investments are made — including Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funded programs — and evaluation data about the prevalence of lead poisoning among Detroit's children, the Detroit City Council and City Planning Commission have made childhood lead poisoning prevention and remediation of lead hazards in Detroit's housing a top priority. Specifically, City Council allocated \$1.74 million in 2001 and \$2.5 million in 2002 CDBG funds for new programs to help the City begin to eradicate this childhood epidemic. In addition, staff has been involved in a number of collaborative efforts.

Since 1999, staff has been a part of the Detroit Lead Partnership, which is a group of representatives from City government, non-profits, the medical community, public schools, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, Wayne State University, and



the State of Michigan Department of Community Health, who meet frequently to discuss the status of the lead service system in Detroit as well as to work toward a more coordinated and effective service system for the future.

At the end of 2002, the Detroit Lead Partnership and City Connect brought key stakeholders together to write a Lead Elimination Action Plan (LEAP) grant to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. This grant, which was supported by the City Council and included participation from staff, was awarded \$999,986. The LEAP partners are expected to raise another \$2.1 million in private dollars over the next two years. The Greater Detroit Area Health Council is serving as the fiduciary agency.

The Mayor has established an Emergency Lead-Based Paint Task Force, which includes representatives from a variety of City departments. Its purpose is to focus on outreach and education as well as expenditure of the City's lead resources. One product of the Task Force is a series of Lead Town Hall meetings designed to educate residents and community organizations across the City.

#### Jeffries Housing Project West ( Woodbridge Estates )

As a part of the new development at the former Jeffries Housing Project West site (now called Woodbridge Estates), CPC reviewed one rezoning request, a site plan review, and an amendment to an existing Planned Development (PD) district. In 1997, the northern portion of the site was rezoned from R6 (High Density Residential District) to PD to allow for the construction of single-family and townhomes.

In January 2001, Scripps Park LLC petitioned CPC to have the southern portion of Woodbridge Estates (generally bounded by Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to the south, Gibson Street to the west, Selden Ave. to the north, and the John C. Lodge Service Drive to the east) rezoned from R6 to PD to accommodate the construction of townhomes, a senior living apartment building, and approximately 40,000 square feet of retail space, as well as the retention of 297 units of apartments for senior citizens in three high-rise buildings and the conversion of one of the existing high-rise buildings into condominiums. The development will be mixed-use and also mixed income, consisting of both rental and owner-occupied, subsidized and market-rate units. Former Jeffries residents will have preference in applying first for the units in the proposed development. The income mix of units is 30 percent public housing, 40 percent tax credit, and 30 percent market rate. The area of the rezoning was 20 acres. The rezoning was approved by City Council in May 2001. The senior living apartment facility is being managed by Presbyterian Villages of Michigan. The petitioner proposes to build a senior living apartment facility. This proposed facility would be at the southwest corner of the Woodbridge Estates development, at the northeast corner of Gibson and Martin Luther King (MLK) Boulevard. The building would be 102,900 square feet in total size, and three stories in height. A total of 118 apartments are proposed. All the units would have subsidized rent. Related to rezoning was an amendment to the Master Plan to change the Future Land Use for the subject area from the original High Density Residential to Medium Density Residential.



## ZONING

### Revision of the Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance Revision Project continued throughout the 2001-2002 period with intensive work carried out by CPC staff. This project, begun in 1998, has undertaken the first comprehensive revision of Detroit's zoning laws since the passage of Ordinance No. 390-G in 1968.

CPC staff has coordinated the analysis, review, and rewrite of the proposed ordinance with an outside consulting team (Clarion Associates of Denver, Duncan Associates of Chicago, Planning and Zoning Center of Lansing, JJ&R/Smith Group of Detroit, and Community Development Services of Detroit), an Interdepartmental Working Group (Buildings and Safety Engineering Department, Planning and Development Department, Board of Zoning Appeals, Law Department, and Department of Environmental Affairs), and a 10-citizen Zoning Advisory Group (Russell Baltimore, Robert Brown, Reba Hawkins, Jay Juergensen, Alexandra Kanakis, Ann Kerwin, Dan Reeves, Gloria Rocha, Mary Steffy, Marilyn Drake Thompson and CPC members David Cason and Robert Glenn).

In early 2001, the outside consultants made an hour-long presentation to Detroit City Council highlighting the work in progress. In August 2002, a 4th draft of the proposed ordinance was released for critique by the Interdepartmental Working Group and Zoning Advisory Group. In October 2002, the City Planning Commission held a second public hearing on the proposed ordinance and received broad comment and

support of the proposed text. Additional comment was received at four neighborhood informational meetings held across the City. A 4-person team of CPC staff took the scores of comments and suggestions from the 2002 gatherings in order to create a 5th draft of the proposed ordinance for action by the City Planning Commission and consideration by the City Council during 2003.



**CPC staff discussing proposed zoning ordinance.**

From L to R: Angeline Lawrence, Marcus Loper, Marcell Todd and Rory Bolger

### Rezoning Cases

During the period of this report, the Commission processed 19 requests for rezoning, including modifications to previously approved plans in Planned Development (PD) districts. Of these, four related to residential developments, one to institutional, one to industrial, six to commercial, and seven to mixed-use developments primarily combining residential with commercial. The Commission is seeing a big increase in the number of mixed-use developments.

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZING/ DOCTOR PROGRAM

The requests were as follows:

- Scripps Park Associates, Inc./Detroit Housing Commission - Modify PD and rezone property for development of Woodbridge Estates
- Planning & Development Dept./Michael Curis-Modify PD and rezone property for Home Depot and Heritage Townhouse/Condominium Development
- Kadesh Missionary Baptist Church - Modify PD plans for construction of church
- Detroit Entertainment L.L.C. - Modify PD to construct office building and parking
- Planning & Development Dept. - Rezoning in McGraw/Sharon area to make zoning consistent with existing land uses
- Planning & Development Dept. - Rezoning in Michigan/Livernois area to help guide future development
- New Center Council, Inc. - Rezoning to SD2 for New Amsterdam residential loft development and Technology Park
- Immanuel Baptist Church - Modify PD on Plymouth Road for church
- RAM Development Corp. - Modify PD to allow for commercial, residential and garage
- Planning & Development Dept - Rezoning to industrial for the I-94 Industrial Rehab project
- City Planning Commission - Rezoning to SD2 and M1 in New Amsterdam area
- Planning & Development Dept. - Rezoning to PD for Jefferson-Chalmers Towne Square mixed-use development

- Fusco, Shaffer & Pappas, Inc. - Rezoning to PD for Harmony Presbyterian Village senior apartments
- ArvinMeritor - Rezoning to M4 for development of technical center
- Covenant House Michigan - Modify PD for existing development serving young adults
- MGM Grand Detroit, L.L.C. - Rezoning to SD5 for construction of casino complex
- Detroit Entertainment, L.L.C. - Rezoning to SD5 for construction of casino complex
- Farbman Group/College Park Partners, L.L.C. - Modify PD for expansion of College Park shopping center
- City Planning Commission - Rezoning of land in near east riverfront from SD5 to SD4 to eliminate casinos as permitted use and allow mixed-use development.

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZING/ DOCTOR PROGRAM

City Council established a community organizing unit within the Commission in 1985 to work with community-based organizations (CBOs) within the City of Detroit. One of the unit's primary roles is to assist in building capacity of CBOs throughout the city. More than 100 groups have been assisted in the past two years. In that vein a unique training program called Developing Organizations Capacity To Operate Resourcefully (DOCTOR) has been in operation since 1992. This program, which involves a series of workshops and intense technical assistance, utilizes a resource team comprised of representatives of banks, nonprofits, technical assistance providers, universi-

# CONSOLIDATED PLAN

ties, and for-profit companies. During the last two years DOCTOR has been supporting efforts of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization to get the districts moving, and developing training for groups that want to be target districts in the future.

In this two-year period, five community-based organizations with the assistance of grants of more than \$200,000 from the Commission's DOCTOR program have developed economic opportunities in their areas and organized and provided support for businesses.

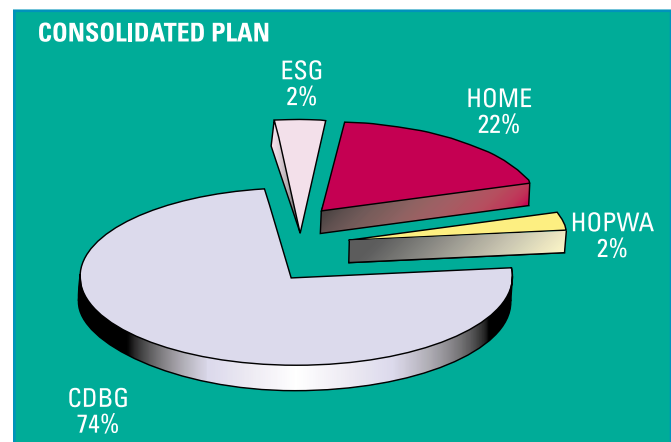
The community organizing unit has also assisted more than 90 community and nonprofit organizations in a variety of areas, such as housing development, funding, and organizing. Examples of this assistance include:

- **West Warren Business Association** - Assists in forming a business association.
- **Flowery Mount Community Development** - Assists with housing survey.
- **Financial Institutions Conference** - Develops and conducts tour of communities and development sites.
- **Home Repair Gap Areas** - Assists several community groups in their efforts to organize the community to be in a position to apply for CDBG funding.
- **Eastside Unity** - Assists with various governmental access problems.


## CONSOLIDATED PLAN

Through a formula allocation, the City of Detroit receives funding for four federal funding programs through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Application for these programs is via a single application called the Consolidated Plan. The four programs include the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME, Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) and the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA) program.

The Consolidated Plan requires that a five-year plan be submitted and updated annually. The most recent five-year plan was submitted to HUD in June 2000 and covers the period from 2000 - 2005.



The five-year plan devotes most of its attention to housing for low and very low-income persons, homeless needs and special needs. Some attention is also paid to lead-based paint hazards, anti-poverty measures, general coordination of services/programs, and economic development. Finally, there is generic language about providing "a broad range of services designed to



make Detroit and its neighborhoods a desirable place to live.” In addition to the five-year plan, each year the City is required to submit a one-year action plan to update the plan and delineate specific activities to be accomplished during the current year within each of the programs.

CDBG funds may be used for many types of activities, including public services (youth tutoring, hot lunch programs, recreational activities, legal services, case management, etc.), public facility rehabilitation, minor home repair, housing rehabilitation, new housing construction, acquisition of property for new housing, public improvements for both residential areas and commercial strips, demolition, planning activities, economic development, technical assistance, and administration. Federal law limits public services to 15% or less of the CDBG budget and planning/administration activities to 20% or less. Adhering to the 15% cap on public services funding is exacerbated by the high demand for public services funding. Requests for public services dollars alone exceed the total of CDBG funds available.

HOME funds are used to provide affordable housing for low income persons through targeted home rehabilitation, rental certificates, investor-owned multiple unit rehabilitation, and housing assistance funding provided to designated community housing development organizations (CHODO's). Emergency Shelter Grants are provided to various shelters and emergency providers to provide services to homeless persons and to prevent homelessness. HOPWA funds are allocated across the seven-county metropolitan area to provide housing and services for persons with AIDS or HIV+.

The 2001-2002 Consolidated Plan total was \$81,925,910, including \$59,873,910 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and program income, \$1,803,000 in Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), \$18,514,000 in HOME, and \$1,732,000 in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). The 2002-2003 Consolidated Plan total was \$81,212,099, including \$59,506,461 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and program income, \$1,796,000 in Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), \$17,996,638 in HOME, and \$1,913,000 in Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA).

The Detroit City Council must approve the Consolidated Plan prior to its submission to HUD. The City Planning Commission has coordinated that review on behalf of the City Council. Proposals submitted for ESG funds are reviewed by the Human Services Department. Applications for HOME and HOPWA activities are handled separately by the Planning and Development Department and the Health Department.

#### Community Development Block Grant

The City of Detroit has received a Community Development Block Grant entitlement since 1976. Community groups submit an application for CDBG funding. The Mayor proposes other activities for funding. While many of the community organizations that apply are funded through the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) (see next page), groups that are doing multiple activities and/or comprehensive, longer-term development projects are funded directly as a CDBG line item.

CPC staff reviewed community organization proposals from 32 and 27 organizations for CDBG funding, respectively for 2001-02 and 2002-03. In addition, other city projects that the Mayor recommended, city staff recommendations, section 108, and other repayment projects were reviewed. During this two-year period, 56 and 71 activities were funded as CDBG line items.

Repayments decreased during the 2001-02 and 2002-03 years (see graph), reflecting final payments for the St. Joseph's Hospital acquisition in 2000 and for the Jefferson Conner Section 108 loan in 2001. Because of increasing demands on the general city revenues, increasing City staff costs are reflected during the 2001-02 and 2002-03 years.

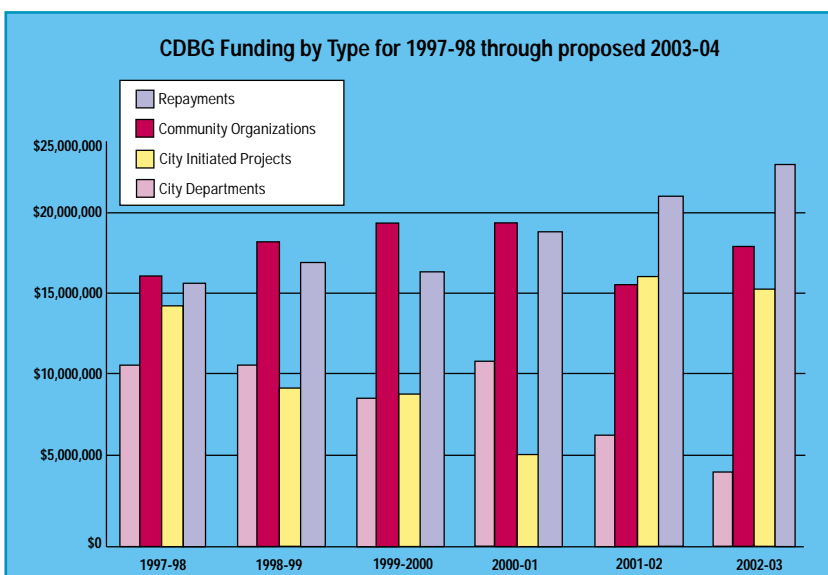
#### Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF)

In 1976, the Detroit City Council set aside 10% of the CDBG funds for the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund to provide funding for neighborhood improvements and neighborhood services identified by neighborhood organizations and neighborhood oriented service organizations. The 10% limitation was removed when the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) changed the application process.

The City Planning Commission office assists in the application development process and conducts proposal-writing workshops for community groups requesting CDBG/NOF funds. Each of the past two years, the CPC staff have hosted

nearly 1000 persons at four proposal writing workshops. Staff then coordinated the review of 257 and 317 applications that were submitted for the 2001-02 and 2002-03 funding years, respectively.

Traditionally in the City Planning Commission office, NOF applicants and CDBG applicants have undergone separate review processes: CRC has reviewed the NOF applications with the assistance of CPC staff and made recommendations to the Planning Commission and CDBG line item groups have been reviewed by staff who develop recommendations. Essentially this has remained a two-track process. Beginning in 2000-2001, CRC members had the opportunity to review the proposed recommendations for the CDBG line item groups and provide feedback to staff in preparation of the recommendations. Additionally, while the review process remains separated during much of the City Council review, the proposed allocations are merged into one process to complete a balanced CDBG budget.





# COMMUNITY ECONOMIC/DEVELOPMENT

## COMMUNITY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Jefferson Village Shopping Center

In 2000 the Graitmark/Walker Development Corporation requested a rezoning in order to develop a new neighborhood shopping center on E. Jefferson between Montclair and St. Jean. The request for a PD (Planned Development District) was to allow for an approximately 128,000 square foot center containing six buildings, anchored by an approximately 70,000 square foot Farmer Jack grocery store with an outlet to contain a family style restaurant. The shopping center is intended to serve the lower east side of the city and was also planned to complement and help serve the proposed Jefferson Village housing development (formerly known as Graitmark), which is to contain 410 new single-family homes immediately south of the shopping center.

Issues that were addressed in the process of the Commission's review included accommodating the truck loading and employee parking needs of a small adjacent industrial facility. As a result of the Commission's review, a portion of the shopping center area was provided to this adjacent facility to allow much-needed space for loading and parking. One of the conditions of the Commission's approval to City Council was a list of uses that were prohibited for the center. This list was generated from community concerns about particular uses being allowed.

The plans for the Jefferson Village Shopping Center were approved by the City Council in March 2001. Construction of the center started in 2002, with the Farmer Jack expected to open in the summer of 2003.

### MGM Rezoning and Master Plan Amendment

This rezoning was initiated in October of 2002 and was the first of three rezonings for the permanent casinos. MGM Grand Detroit has been approved to construct a casino-hotel complex in the area bounded by Third Ave., Bagley, and the Lodge and Fisher Freeways, in the northwest corner of the Central Business District and immediately west of the DTE Energy Headquarters. Rezoning was approved in November 2002.

The building has a traditional, even conservative, appearance. The design fits well with Detroit's stock of early 20th Century downtown buildings. The first floor will be comprised of the casino floor, restau-



Artist's rendering of proposed permanent MGM Casino.

rants, very limited retail, and back-of-house activities. Restaurants and entertainment venues will be around the perimeter of the casino floor. The second floor will contain back-of-house activities above the restaurants, a bingo “hall,” and conference facilities tied to the hotel. The hotel is proposed to be 16 stories in height and to have its own access to the subsurface parking levels for both valet and self-parking. Conference space is connected to the hotel, as is a full-service spa and pool. Space has been designated for, and the hotel designed to join to, a second 400-room hotel tower immediately to the west of the first tower. Three main parking facilities are included in the development for a total of 5,625 parking spaces.

As this was a rezoning under the SD5 ordinance, the rezoning was done in two phases. The first phase approved the site and basic building envelope, including a mass model and generalized elevations and floor plans. The second phase included the final appearance of the complex, including items such as ornamentation, landscaping and thematic expression concepts.

#### [I-94 Industrial Park Rezoning & Master Plan Amendment](#)

The area bounded by Mt. Elliott, Huber, Winfield, Grinnell, Van Dyke, St. Cyril, and Miller Rd. was requested to be rezoned to M4 (Heavy Industrial) and M2 (Restricted Industrial District) and developed as an industrial park that would include structures consisting of approximately 2,500,000 square feet of gross floor area over a period of time. The rezoning of this primarily residential area was initiated in September 2001 to allow a wide selection of indus-

tries, both warehouse/distribution and manufacturing, to locate in the park. The M2 around the southern, eastern and western edges of the area is designed to act as a buffer between the industrial park and the adjacent homes and school. This development and rezoning are in accordance with the previously approved Economic Development Corporation Project Plan for the I-94 Industrial Park Project. The subject area is also in a Brownfield Redevelopment area. The rezoning was approved in August 2002.

The City intends to sell the property within the project area of the rezoning to Ashley Capital, a company that intends to develop the industrial park. The site is presently being cleared in phases to allow construction to begin. In October 2002, an amendment to the Master Plan of Policies for the same area was approved, to bring the Master Plan into alignment with the previously approved rezoning.

#### [Brush Park Modified Development Plan](#)

In the beginning of 2000, CPC staff began working with the Planning and Development on amendments to the Brush Park Modified Development Plan. There was considerable confusion about and opposition to the amendments by certain portions of the community. Discussions were held with the community as the Plan was developed. CPC staff attended many of those meetings and offered to help the community, especially the Citizens’ District Council (CDC), understand the changes. Staff also worked with City Council to incorporate some the changes suggested at the public hearing on the amendments and in written comments submitted by the CDC. In July of 2001, City Council



## CPC INITIATIVES

approved the amendments with most of the community-requested changes.

Most parts of the plan were modified. To accommodate the increased densities desired by developers, changes to the Land Use and Development Plan were made. There was also a rethinking of the circulation pattern desired for Brush Park. The acquisition list was substantially modified, and the exemption list eliminated. These lists have been a source of confusion and frustration in the past. Also designed to enhance the residential neighborhood character of the area are a neighborhood center area and commercial areas. An open space requirement has also been added.

### 3600 Woodward

The RAM Development Company proposed to develop a 4.5-acre parcel at the corner of Woodward and Mack by constructing a residential/commercial project with structured parking. The site represented the last undeveloped parcel of what was once urban renewal land within the City's Medical Center area and was zoned PD (Planned Development District) which required site plan review by the Commission. The developer proposed to build three structures: a three-story garden style apartment building containing 135 units sitting along Mack, a four-story building facing Woodward containing approximately 20,145 square feet of street level retail with 45 loft condominium units above, and a six-level, 810-space parking garage. As the site is a major intersection in the city, the project was designed using traditional urban architecture including buildings fronting on major streets and a series of walkways linking public sidewalks and running throughout the site.

Issues addressed in the Commission's review of the project included loading areas, fencing, traffic, security, and exterior building materials. The City Council approved the plans with conditions as recommended by the City Planning Commission in September 2001. The parking structure would be completed in the summer of 2003, with the apartment and retail condo buildings to start construction soon thereafter.

## CPC INITIATIVES

### Code Enforcement

The City Planning Commission adopted code enforcement as one of its primary initiatives for the 2002-03 fiscal year. Code enforcement had emerged over the years as a major concern of the Commissioners based on what they saw as growing community frustration related to residents having problems obtaining information on the status of City Code violations once reported, haphazard enforcement, and violators continuing to work on property while in violation of the Code without penalty, and who find it easier to pay fines rather than make the required corrections. A Working Group on Code Enforcement composed of Commissioners and staff was formed to develop a problem statement, goal, objectives and strategies related to this issue.

The Commission's initial focus was to identify ways to encourage the implementation of the Municipal Civil Infractions Ordinance. This Ordinance had been approved by the City Council in 1997 as a means of bringing about greater compliance with the Zoning Ordinance by decriminalizing violations, thereby allowing for higher fines than permitted for misde-

meanors and requiring a lower standard of guilt than “beyond a reasonable doubt.” Zoning violations would be handled similar to parking violations, with fines payable to the City, rather than being prosecuted as misdemeanors and going to court where they are routinely given low priority. The Commission had recommended approval of the Municipal Civil Infractions Ordinance to City Council and was disappointed that the City administration had not implemented what they felt would be a useful mechanism to improve the quality of life in the city.

The Commission held a public discussion with the director of the City’s Buildings and Safety Engineering for an update and an explanation of the status of the implementation of the Ordinance. The Commission then presented this issue at a joint meeting with the City Council in 2002. By the end of 2002 the City administration began the process of setting up the Municipal Civil Infractions Bureau that would start functioning in 2003.

#### Evaluation of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) Programs

The City Planning Commission recommended that the evaluation project be continued to document the impact of CDBG/NOF investment and to implement some additional studies on needs assessment and affordable housing. In an attempt to maximize project funding, the Wayne State evaluation team has implemented a process whereby 100 sites are visited each year and the other applicants are either surveyed by the WSU team or are visited by CPC staff. A comprehensive report is generated on each applicant and forwarded

to the Citizen Review Committee for review. Copies are also made available for City Council and staff as requested. The sites visited each year are selected based on either a referral by the Citizen Review Committee, City Planning Commission, CPC staff, or by random selection. Ideally, each organization will be selected at least once every three years.

The Wayne State University team conducted a needs assessment including focus groups in each of the ten Community Reinvestment Strategy clusters across the city to determine most needed activities for both CDBG and general fund dollars. Further assessment and assistance was provided for the youth tutoring projects; lead activities included continued leadership with the Detroit Lead Partnership and additional reporting and mapping of children with elevated blood lead levels. Work underway includes the outcomes monitoring project and the affordable housing study (see below).

The data collected by the Evaluation Team on the CDBG/NOF projects has provided significant documentation of the work that these community organizations are accomplishing in the City of Detroit. Staff have had some very complimentary feedback from community organizations in terms of the assistance that has been provided to the organizations in how to best document outputs and outcomes. The findings demonstrated the wide variety of activities funded through CDBG/NOF as well as the levels of output for the majority of the organizations. In previous years, this team also took on the task of documenting the contracting processes and other program activities. This work has been minimal at this time with limited cooperation of the departments involved.



## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### Affordable Housing Study

One piece of the Evaluation Project has been the affordable housing study. The Team has been an ongoing participant in City Council's Affordable Housing Task Force and subcommittees. In addition, the team conducted stakeholder interviews with City Council and City Planning Commission members and will follow up with other stakeholders within the administration and housing development organizations. There was a comprehensive analysis of the SF-1, and later, SF-2 census data. The initial analysis documented the amount of housing within the City and the projected need over the next 10 years. Major findings and implications included:

- Housing units are decreasing faster than population
- Vacancies continue to escalate
- Large share (43%) of homeowners are 55 or older
- Almost 66% of households with children are unmarried households
- Homeownership (54.9%) increased (2%), as racial gap decreased (12%)
- Housing, population, and household characteristics vary by sector

A subsequent report provided further analysis and model housing policies that could maximize more private investment, including the targeting of resources. This report also identified potential criteria for selecting target areas for investment. Additional research and analysis will be completed over the next year.

### OTHER ACTIVITIES

#### Aquarium Study

On March 27, 2002, the City Council requested the staff of the City Planning Commission to conduct a survey and submit a report on how aquariums were being used as development tools in other cities, financing mechanisms, operation support mechanisms, and the successes and failures of these facilities. CPC staff conducted a survey of thirty-three (33) freestanding aquariums accredited by the American Zoo and Aquarium association (AZA) ranging from Atlantis Marine World in Riverhead, New York, to Waikiki Aquarium in Honolulu, Hawaii. The study compiled specific information on a variety of operational parameters, such as year opened, annual operating budget, size, attendance figures, admission fees, ownership, and ancillary businesses. The study also addresses the factors that contribute to the overall success or failure of aquariums, such as location, management, independent commissions, public authorities/special tax districts, and ability to attract tourists/marketing, and exhibits.

The report listed a number of lessons to be learned or steps that should be taken or avoided in preparation for the development of an aquarium, including the importance of market and feasibility studies, realistic attendance projections, and opening an aquarium with little or no debt. To provide an in-depth analysis, the Planning Commission staff conducted case studies for four aquariums. Four aquariums were selected as case studies due to their respective successes and impacts on the local economies where they were located: New England Aquarium (Boston), New Jersey State Aquarium (Camden), South Carolina Aquarium (Charleston), and Tennessee Aquarium (Chattanooga).



The study concluded that the development of an aquarium in Detroit may help in revitalizing the riverfront and that the city may possess many of the advantages necessary for the development of a new aquarium. The report cautioned, however, that an aquarium was not a guaranteed success, but rather a chancy proposition, and should be pursued with caution.

#### Commercial Strip Revitalization Program

In October 2001, the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization was opened and began operations. This opening was the culmination of the efforts of the Detroit City Council's Task Force on Commercial Strip Revitalization, coordinated by the Planning Commission, and the Neighborhood Commercial Network. The program that emerged is unique to Detroit and is a hybrid of the Boston Main Street model and the Denver Colorado Neighborhood Business Revitalization program.

Additionally the program offers a unique partnership between the Mayor, City Council and the Funders' Collaborative. In the summer of 2002, five districts were selected through a competitive process to begin implementation of the program objectives. Services include training and technical assistance for businesses, grants for facade improvements, design services, and operating funds for local operating entities.



**Planning Commissioners tour Ford Field.**

(L to R) Josh Sardini of Hammus Group, Dr. David Cason Jr., Arthur Simons, John Slater, Linda Smith, Dr. Creigs Beverly and Robert Glenn

Projected annual funding includes \$890,000 from CDBG funds and \$625,000 from the Funders' Collaborative. There will also be established a capital assistance fund of one million dollars or more to provide loans to businesses. The ONCR has a staff of two people and works closely with an advisory board made up of small business people, Council and Mayoral representatives, the Funder's' Collaborative, Booker T. Washington Business Association, and Community Development Advocates of Detroit.



### Wireless Tower Site Review Committee

CPC staff has continued to sit as members of the Mayor's Wireless Tower Site Review Committee at the Committee's twice-monthly meetings. In 1988, Commission staff had drafted the first comprehensive Antenna Ordinance for the City, and in the mid-1990s, executive orders created this advisory review committee to ensure careful review and monitoring of the placement of antenna towers and other cell sites by the six licensees of the Federal Communications Commission (Cingular, Verizon, Sprint, AT&T, Nextel, and VoiceStream). A CPC staff member presently serves as vice chairperson of the committee. In addition to reviewing applications for cell sites in the City of Detroit, CPC staff will coordinate the Committee's 2003 update and rewrite of the Antenna Ordinance in consultation with the wireless industry.

### Master Plan Revision

The Planning and Development Department has initiated a comprehensive revision of the City's Master Plan of Policies. The City Planning Commission staff has started its preliminary review of the drafts of the revisions. One of the intentions of the revisions is to incorporate the results of the Community Reinvestment Strategy (CRS) process that took place during the mid-1990s. The CRS effort involved dividing the city into clusters and the election of community representatives within each cluster to provide input into a planning process. The results of the process had been published but never incorporated formally into the City's Master Plan. Information from the 2000 Census, updated development project information and the results of staff survey work will also be incorporated into the revised Master Plan.

It is expected that the current Master Plan sector boundaries would be changed to the CRS cluster boundaries. The layout of the elements of the plan would also be changed. The existing plan has only four general categories of policies: economic, social, physical, and intergovernmental, in addition to the sector plans. There are at least 10 general elements now being considered. There are also 6 categories from the CRS that will be reviewed.

City Planning Commission staff's preliminary review has involved a survey of each cluster and review of the content of the draft revisions. The draft revisions are being presented to the public for input in the spring of 2003. The entire revision should be formally submitted to the City Planning Commission and City Council before the end of 2003.